

Wilderness Defined

Stated simply, federal wilderness is public land where, to the greatest extent possible, “the earth and its community of life” are allowed to continue in their timeless course of events, unhampered by human interference.

In 1964 Congress established the National Wilderness Preservation System, which includes all our nation’s wilderness areas, to “*secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.*”

As defined in the Wilderness Act, the Bighorn Mountain Wilderness offers *opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation*. These can include hiking, backpacking, photography, dry camping and horseback riding.

Responsibilities

All of us, when visiting wilderness, are to protect and preserve these areas for future generations—our children and grandchildren. In particular, please refrain from activities likely to injure wildlife or vegetation, including standing dead trees. Please do not use motorized vehicles or mechanized transport devices in the wilderness, as these are prohibited by the Wilderness Act, except under very specific conditions.

Risks

When planning to use wilderness, and while using it, you accept the risks that were there when the wilderness was established. Typically, measures have not been taken to protect your safety, whether the risks are natural or the result of human activity before the area became wilderness (old mine shafts, for example). Measures to rescue you will be a priority only during authentic life-threatening emergencies involving personal health or safety. When planning your visit, contact your local BLM or Forest Service office well in advance. Ask about access and fire conditions, and whether it is reasonable to bring pets. Be advised that natural water supplies may not be suitable for drinking or cooking.

BLM/CA/GI-2008-0012+8500

Emergency Services

If **Emergency Services** are required, your first response should be to **call 911**. The nearest Ranger can be reached through the **Federal Interagency Communication Center (FICC)** at **(909) 383-5651** or **(888) 233-6518**.

Lost Person

If a member of your party becomes lost, don’t panic. Make a note of where the person was last seen and at what time. Call 911 to report the situation. Active search and rescue teams can be dispatched to assist.

Injured Person

It is usually best not to transport an injured person away from an accident scene before medical personnel arrive. Moving a victim improperly can make an injury worse, particularly when the injury is to the head, neck, or back area. If possible, send someone to get help or call 911 to report the incident.

Nearest Hospital

Hi-Desert Med Center 6601 White Feather Rd Joshua Tree, CA 92252 (760) 366-3711	Arrowhead Regional Center 400 N. Pepper Ave. Colton, CA 92324 (909) 580-1608
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Phone Numbers

BLM Barstow Field Office	(760) 252-6000
BLM Wilderness Coordinator	(760) 252-6042
BLM Volunteer Program	(760) 252-6011
San Bernardino National Forest,	
Big Bear Discovery Center	(909) 382-2790

Office hours for the BLM numbers above are Mon.-Fri. 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Otherwise please leave a message.

Managed By:

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau Of Land Management 2601 Barstow Road Barstow, California 92311	U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service 602 S. Tippecanoe Ave. San Bernardino, California 92408
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<http://www.blm.gov/ca/barstow>

Bighorn Mountain Wilderness



The United States Congress established the Bighorn Mountain Wilderness in 1994 and it now has a total of 38,502 acres. All of this wilderness is in California, with different portions being managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service.

The rugged Bighorn Mountains, in the north central portion of this wilderness, are ‘foothills’ of the San Bernardino Mountains. Over a fairly short but steep distance, visitors may experience unusually condensed biologic changes, from Yucca and Joshua trees at the desert floor to stands of Jeffrey Pine at higher elevations, including 7,500-foot-high Granite Peak. Occasionally, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat and golden eagles still may be encountered in the more remote corners. Resident and migratory birds can be seen in several major drainages (e.g., Rattlesnake Canyon).

Most summers are very hot and dry. For safety and comfort, consider visiting the Bighorn Mountain Wilderness from October to May. United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 minute quad maps are advisable for travel in this wilderness.

BLM-administered wilderness lands are part of the National Landscape Conservation System, which consists of areas that Congress or the President has established to protect, conserve, and restore the natural and heritage resources on the public lands.

Prior to your visit, please visit our website at:

www.blm.gov/ca/pa/wilderness/wa/areas/bighorn_mountain.html



Barstow Field Office

BLM

Area Specifics

Directions

The Bighorn Mountain Wilderness is located in San Bernardino County, 70 miles north of Palm Springs, CA. To access this area use State Hwy. 247 (see map on other side).

Description

With two separate units managed by the BLM and its western portion managed by the US Forest Service, the Bighorn Mountain Wilderness boundary includes nearly 39,000 acres in the northeastern foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. From scattered Joshua trees at the desert edge (3,560 feet), you can hike up through pinion-juniper areas to Jeffrey pines and yellow pines near Granite Peak (7,500 feet).

Areas of Interest

Areas of interest include Rattlesnake Canyon, Ruby Canyon and Bighorn Canyon. Rattlesnake Canyon has an OHV access corridor with wilderness on both sides. Four-wheel drive with high clearance is highly recommended. Please respect private property on the east, south and west boundaries of Unit Two, and expect occasional low-flying aircraft. With a long history of mineral exploration, this wilderness contains mine shafts, tunnels and prospecting holes. For your own safety, please stay out of them. You may see cattle or burros, which can be “ornery”. Leave them alone and let BLM or the Forest Service know where and when you saw them. Note that cattle grazing, in some parts of this wilderness, is authorized.

Weather

Temperature extremes range from winter lows well below freezing to summer highs above 100 degrees F. Precipitation is minimal, most of it in the winter, but summer thunder storms can arrive with impressive effect. In summer, layered clothing slows dehydration and minimizes exposure. Good hiking shoes, loose fitting natural-fiber clothing, a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen are recommended. In winter bring extra warm clothing and dress in layers. For weather forecast information go to www.weather.gov and do a search on ‘Yucca Valley, CA’.

AREA MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS & TIPS

With very rare exceptions, no motorized equipment or mechanical transport is allowed. This is generally true for all federal lands managed as designated wilderness.

Remember, when visiting any wilderness area, always follow these Leave No Trace principles:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Access: Very few Bighorn Mountain Wilderness boundary sites can be reached safely with an ordinary passenger vehicle. High-clearance Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) are strongly recommended.

Park your vehicle outside the wilderness. Do not drive around any post & cable barrier, and stop if you see rocks, brush and other natural materials scattered in the trail ahead to alert you. If you make a mistake, brush out your tracks. If you see or hear vehicles in the wilderness, call BLM or the Forest Service immediately.

Private Property: Unit 2 of this wilderness has privately-owned land along its east, south and west boundaries. Use these lands only with the owner's permission.

Mine Shafts & Tunnels: Do not enter mine shafts and tunnels. They are not maintained and are unsafe—you could fall through rotting timber or the mine may cave in. Be safe, stay out!

